

CEPPS/IRI Quarterly Report: January 1 - March 31, 2005
NIGERIA- Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria: Political Party and Civil
Society Partnerships
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I. SUMMARY

The International Republican Institute-Nigeria (IRI-Nigeria) continued implementing activities of its new phase of programming in this quarter. This current phase of programming seeks to build on IRI-Nigeria's previous program by continuing to strengthen the foundation of political parties in Nigeria. In this quarter, IRI-Nigeria conducted its fifth *State Party Leaders Academy* (SPLA) workshop in Enugu State in Southeast Nigeria. IRI-Nigeria also held a major Stakeholders Forum in this quarter to review IRI's program with stakeholders and renew their commitment to it. In addressing the youth programming aspect of its current chapter of activities in Nigeria, IRI-Nigeria conducted its second University Outreach workshop this quarter at the University of Jos. Lastly, IRI-Nigeria continued with its on-going Conflict/Political Roundtables in this quarter. The topic of the Conflict/Political Roundtable held this quarter was "Political Party Reporting and Democratic Consolidation: Roles of the Media."

II. BACKGROUND

Political parties acting in concert with civil society organizations (CSOs) constitute the mechanism par excellence of democratic consolidation. However, the years immediately following Nigeria's transition to democracy provided limited room for the development of these essential institutions. With only three parties and dominated by former military ruling elites, Nigeria struggled to open political space in which a truly representative government could grow. Furthermore, CSOs struggled to transform themselves from opponents of the military regime to issue advocates that could pressure a legitimate government for essential reforms.

Shortly before the 2003 elections, a total of 27 new parties were registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), most of the new parties were inexperienced and possessed weak party structures. Even with limited time for campaigns, some of these new parties' presented an impressive showing in the elections. The emergence of these new parties in the Nigerian political spectrum and the expansion of the civil society leading up to the 2003 elections offer new promise for democratic consolidation. Enhancing the capacity of these institutions and developing the latent synergies between them is fundamental to realizing sustainable democracy in Nigeria.

In designing its post-elections program, IRI consulted with political party leaders at the state and national levels, as well as with representatives from CSOs. As a result of the consultations, IRI ascertained that parties are deficient in their basic structural elements. IRI seeks to address this deficiency through a series of programs tailored to help the parties develop better communications strategies, issue-based platforms and improve their organizational structures. Additionally, through workshops, symposia and roundtable discussions parties would be encouraged to partner with CSOs to explore partnership opportunities for promoting mutual agendas. Furthermore, parties would be encouraged to increase the participation of women and youth in the political process.

III. ACTIVITIES

State Party Leaders Academy

On January 22-24, 2005, IRI-Nigeria conducted its fifth *State Party Leaders Academy* in Enugu State, Nigeria. The workshop was conducted after IRI-Nigeria held extensive consultations with political party representatives in Enugu from January 10-January 14, 2005. The objective of the workshop was to address the individual and collective capacity needs of the political parties in the state. The workshop was attended by representatives of ten political parties in the state. The parties represented were as follows: Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Nigeria Democratic Party (NDP), National Conscience Party (NCP), Alliance for Democracy (AD), United Nigeria Peoples Party (UNPP), All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), Movement for Democracy and Justice (MDJ), Labour Party (LP) and Progressive Action of Nigeria (PAC). Each party was represented by their State Party Chairman, State Party Secretary, State Party Women's Leader, State Party Youth Leader and one additional active party member. The workshop focused on the topics of fundraising, membership recruitment and management, youth and women participation in politics, roles and responsibilities of party officials, and party structure and organization. At the end of the workshop, each of the parties used the training they had received to develop concrete plans of action and committed to implement them within specific time frames.

Stakeholders Forum

On February 9, 2005, IRI-Nigeria held a stakeholder forum in Abuja, Nigeria. The forum was a gathering of stakeholders with a vested interest in Nigeria's political and democratic development. The event was attended by representatives of political parties on both the national and state levels; representatives of the donor community, such as USAID; and representatives of a diverse group of issue-based civil society organizations. The goals of the forum were manifold:

- Reviewing IRI-Nigeria's post election programming components
- Receiving feedback from Nigeria's political parties on training activities undertaken by IRI-Nigeria with political parties on the state and national levels

- Assessing new capacity needs of political parties in Nigeria
- Fostering better communication and relationships between political party representatives on the state and national levels
- Encouraging partnerships between political parties and civil society organizations

Political parties represented at the forum confirmed their continued commitment to IRI-Nigeria's programmatic activities. State party representatives also held presentations at the forum illustrating the impact of IRI-Nigeria's training with political parties on the state level.

University Outreach Workshop

On February 23-24, 2005, IRI-Nigeria held its second University Outreach workshop at the University of Jos in Plateau State. The first University Outreach workshop was conducted at Benue State University in 2004 and it focused on the needs of the student union government of that particular university. The University Outreach workshops are a sub-component of IRI-Nigeria's youth programming. The goals of these workshops are to educate, train, and teach student leaders about salient issues such as accountability, rule of law, participatory governance and transparency. Prior to holding the workshop at the University of Jos, IRI-Nigeria conducted a pre-workshop assessment with students and university officials to ascertain their main issues and concerns. IRI's pre-workshop assessment indicated that the main issue of conflict between students and university officials was a festering rift between university officials and student parliamentarians over issues relating to misappropriation of student union funds. IRI-Nigeria highlighted the rift between student leaders and university officials in the outreach workshop. Training sessions for student leaders and University officials at the workshop centered on leadership, democratic values on campus, team-building and conflict resolution tactics that can be utilized to reduce tension and conflict at the university. After the workshop, student leaders and university officials held an immediate meeting to resolve their differences and work together using the skills they received from the training.

Conflict/Political Roundtable

On January 27, 2005 IRI-Nigeria held a conflict/political roundtable as part of its on-going efforts to bring stakeholders in Nigeria's democracy together for dialogue and debate on relevant issues. The topic of the roundtable was "Political Party Reporting and Democratic Consolidation: Roles of the Media." Participants included representatives of media organizations in Nigeria, representatives of civil society organizations with a focus on media and representatives of the academic community. The roundtable generated dialogue about the role of the media in Nigeria's democratic consolidation, why viable political reporting is essential to the electoral process and the shortcomings that affect the media's political reporting abilities.

Consultations

IRI-Nigeria continued to hold regular consultations with all its partners in this quarter. These consultations were held with political parties in Nigeria to receive valuable feedback on IRI's training workshops and to gauge the on-going capacity needs of the parties. IRI-Nigeria also held consultations with other NGO's in Nigeria this quarter to discuss the possibilities of coordinating efforts and activities in the future. Additionally, IRI-Nigeria consistently held consultations with USAID to brief them on their current and future programming and activities.

IV. RESULTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Objective 1: To strengthen the organizational structure and viability of Nigerian Political Parties.

IRI-Nigeria's *State Party Leaders Academy* in Enugu State this quarter strengthened the organizational capabilities and viability of the Nigerian political parties that participated in the event. Pre-workshop consultations gave IRI-Nigeria the opportunity to gauge and grasp the capacity needs of the parties to allow the workshop to be tailored around those needs. After receiving the training, the participants at the workshop drafted individual party plans with action items aimed at strengthening their organizational structures.

Objective 2: To improve the capacity of Nigerian political parties to work closely with civil society organizations in the development of issue – based strategies to respond to voters' concerns.

IRI-Nigeria's Stakeholder Forum in this quarter enhanced the opportunity and capacity of Nigerian political parties to work closely with civil society organizations in the development of issue-based strategies to respond to voters' concerns. At the forum, several political parties became familiar with the work done by various CSO's in Nigeria. Using the training they received at the SPLA workshops, political parties at the Forum sought out CSO's with similar goals to develop their platform and messages. In other words, the event brought together political party representatives and civil society representatives in a common forum to build linkages and foster partnerships that will respond to voters' concerns.

Objective 3: To assist women and youth in political parties, civil society and governmental structures.

One of the main foci of the IRI-Nigeria SPLA in Enugu State this quarter was the participation of women and youth in political parties and the political process writ large. The workshop trained participants on how to recruit and define the roles of women and youth in their political party wings

The University Outreach Workshop at the University of Jos also assisted politically motivated youth at the campus with much needed training. The workshop's focus on leadership, conflict resolution and accountability helped the youth develop the values critical to developing a democratic environment at the university. The workshop also provided the students and university officials with hands-on experience resolving existing tension and misunderstanding between them.

V. EVALUATION

IRI-Nigeria's continues to receive steadfast commitment and active participation from its partners in its current chapter of programming. The State Party Leaders Academy, the flagship of IRI-Nigeria's current activities, enjoys tremendous success as it has now spanned across almost all six geo-political zones in Nigeria and continues to generate large interest and positive feedback. IRI-Nigeria's University Outreach Workshops and its Conflict/Political Roundtables also highlight relevant contemporary issues that define politics in Nigeria and produce a high degree of interest and impact among stakeholders.

VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

In the next quarter, IRI will conduct a Post-SPLA Assessment and Mentorship workshop in Benue State. The objective is to offer hands-on assistance to participants of the Benue State SPLA workshop as they plan to implement training received at the workshop.

IRI-Nigeria also intends to hold a major Communications Workshop in the next quarter for Nigeria's political parties to address their external and intra-party communications needs. Additionally, another SPLA is slated for the next quarter in Bauchi State.